

# APPENDIX E

## WAVERLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

### PLANNING POLICY SIG - 9 DECEMBER 2008

#### REPORT TO THE EXECUTIVE - 6 JANUARY 2009

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**Title:**

**WAVERLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK –  
CORE STRATEGY TOPIC PAPERS**

[Portfolio Holder for Planning: Cllr Mrs Carole Cockburn]  
[Wards Affected: All]

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**Summary and purpose:**

The purpose of this report is to update the Executive on the progress of the Local Development Framework (LDF) and, in particular, to seek authority to consult on a series of Topic Papers for the LDF Core Strategy.

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**How this report relates to the Council's Corporate Priorities:**

The LDF forms part of the new spatial planning system. As national policy states, the system exists to deliver positive social, economic and environmental outcomes, and requires collaboration with the wide range of stakeholders and agencies that help to shape local areas and deliver local services. The LDF will contribute to the achievement of Corporate Priorities in relation to the Environment, Improving Lives, Leisure and Subsidised Affordable Housing.

**Equality and Diversity Implications:**

Both the process of producing the Local Development Framework (LDF), for example in terms of community engagement, and the LDF policies themselves will have potential implications that will need to be considered as the LDF progresses.

**Resource/Value for Money implications:**

In setting out the programme for the LDF it will be necessary to take account of the resource implications. This is to ensure that work is prioritised and that the proposed programme of LDF work can be delivered within the available resources. The Core Strategy and other related LDF work is anticipated to be resource hungry, occupying much of the time of the Policy Team over the next 18-24 months.

**Legal Implications:**

There are no legal implications arising from this report

## Introduction

1. Members will recall that, at the meeting in October, the Executive considered an update report on the Local Development Framework (LDF). The Executive endorsed the direction of travel of the LDF, including the draft Spatial Portrait, the list of Core Strategy Issues, the draft Vision and draft Core Strategy Objectives. The next step in the progress of the Core Strategy has been the production of a series of Topic Papers, focussing on the key issues for the Core Strategy where there are choices to be made. The intention is to consult on these choices and options, with a view to assisting in the subsequent identification of the preferred options for dealing with the key issues.

## The Topic Papers

2. The following Topic Papers have been produced:-
  - **Town & Country** – This deals with the key strategic decisions regarding the distribution of development across the Borough. In particular, it deals with the broad choices regarding the location of new housing in Waverley, building on the issues considered in the “Big Debate”. It also covers fundamental issues such as whether the Council should plan to deliver the minimum 5,000 new homes required by the South East Plan or whether there is any justification for actively planning for a higher number of houses. There is also the issue of “windfall developments”, whether there is a case to include an allowance for windfalls in the housing supply and whether there is any scope to control these unplanned windfall developments in the event that housing delivery exceeds that which is required. It also deals with the related issues of infrastructure and access to services.
  - **Living and Working** – This Topic Paper deals with more detailed matters regarding housing, particularly housing needs issues, including choices regarding the Council’s approach on affordable housing, the mix of housing generally and special needs housing, including the accommodation requirements of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople. It also deals with employment issues including choices regarding the approach to safeguarding existing employment sites and the identification of new sites. It presents some choices regarding town centres and finally covers leisure, recreation and tourism.
  - **Environment, Biodiversity and Climate Change** – This is a wide-ranging paper. It deals with some of the choices regarding the best approach to protecting both the urban and rural environment. It also deals with issues regarding the planning response to climate change. This focuses on choices regarding the promotion of sustainable construction and the use of renewable and low carbon energy.
3. Outlines of the Topic Papers were considered by the Planning Policy Special Interest Group (SIG) at its meeting on 30 October 2008. The worked-up drafts of the Topic Papers have since been considered at a further meeting of the Planning Policy SIG, which took place on 9 December. Copies of the draft Topic Papers are attached as Annexe 1. The Council’s consultant dealing

with the Sustainability Appraisal is assessing the Topic Papers. If he has any specific comments from a Sustainability Appraisal perspective, these will be reported orally.

4. The Topic Papers do not present possible options for all the issues that the final Core Strategy will cover. There are matters that will need to be dealt with in the Core Strategy, but where there are not clear alternative options that can be identified. For example, given the existing national and local policy framework, there are no obvious choices regarding the approach that the Council takes to safeguarding the Borough's heritage.

### **The Proposed Consultation**

5. There has already been extensive targeted consultation during the evolution of the Core Strategy. This has included one-to-one discussions with the key service and infrastructure providers in Waverley. In addition, the "Big Debate" poll and survey, which was conducted in the summer, gave residents and other interested parties an opportunity to comment on broad options regarding the location of housing.
6. The intention with the proposed consultation is to reach a wider audience, seeking comments from local residents and a range of other stakeholders on the key Core Strategy issues. The aim being to shape the "direction of travel" that the Core Strategy needs to take as we start to identify the preferred approach on the key issues.
7. Other work will continue alongside the consultation on the Topic Papers. In particular, Officers are keen to finalise some of the important evidence gathering that is currently underway, including the Housing Market Assessment (HMA), the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) and the Employment Land Review (ELR). Where these documents will impact on the Core Strategy, it is made clear in the Topic Papers that final choices may depend on the evidence emerging from these studies. Similarly, the Core Strategy must be in accordance with the South East Plan, which is expected to be finalised some time in the New Year, following consideration of the responses to the consultation on the Secretary of State's proposed changes. Clearly the final choices on some issues will depend on what is in the approved version of the South East Plan.
8. The consultation will also provide local residents and others the opportunity to comment on the Draft Spatial Portrait, the list of Core Strategy Issues, the draft Vision and the Draft Core Strategy Objectives. Although the Executive endorsed these in October, this consultation will be the first opportunity for a wider consultation on these emerging parts of the Core Strategy.

### **The Settlement Hierarchy**

9. An important piece of on-going evidence work has been the development of a Settlement Hierarchy. To date, officers have focused on gathering information on matters like the range of services available within settlements and public

transport accessibility. As a result, the various towns and villages have been ranked within a hierarchy, based on these considerations. The Settlement Hierarchy provides an assessment of the relative sustainability and accessibility of the various settlements in Waverley. This can then be used as evidence to guide choices that are made about the distribution of new housing across the Borough. The Town and Parish Councils have already been invited to contribute to the preparation of the Settlement Hierarchy, by providing information about services and facilities in their area. The proposed consultation will provide an opportunity for the public to comment on the draft Settlement Hierarchy. Given its size, the Settlement Hierarchy document is not being distributed with the agenda, but a copy will be placed in the Members' Room.

### **Next Steps**

10. The outcome of this consultation will help in the development of the Preferred Options for the Core Strategy. The intention is that there will be further public consultation on the Preferred Options (i.e. the draft Core Strategy itself) later in the year. Officers will be discussing the LDF timetable with representatives from GOSE over the coming weeks, with a view to bringing a revised Local Development Scheme (LDS), which sets out the LDF timetable, to the Executive, probably in March. This will set out the agreed timetable for the remaining work on the Core Strategy, together with the timetable for the production of other related LDF documents.

### **Recommendation**

It is recommended that

1. the Executive agrees the Core Strategy Topic Papers and the Settlement Hierarchy as the basis for public consultation; and
2. the Head of Planning be authorised, in consultation with the Planning Portfolio Holder, to make any minor revisions to the formatting and content of the Topic Papers and the Settlement Hierarchy prior to the commencement of the proposed consultation.

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### **Background Papers (CSP)**

There are no background papers (as defined by Section 100D(5) of the Local Government Act 1972) relating to this report.

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### **CONTACT OFFICER:**

**Name:** Graham Parrott

**Telephone:** 01483 523472

**E-mail:** [graham.parrott@waverley.gov.uk](mailto:graham.parrott@waverley.gov.uk)